

Message Text

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64

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01

TRSE-00 /058 W

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R 221710Z NOV 76

FM AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5487

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE ALGIERS 2761

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, AG, PGOV

SUBJECT: ALGERIAN CONSTITUTION ADOPTED BY REFERENDUM

REF: ALGIERS 1655

1. ALGERIAN CONSTITUTION MASSIVELY APPROVED BY
REFERENDUM NOVEMBER 19. FINAL RESULTS OF VOTING,
AS REPORTED IN PRESS, ARE AS FOLLOWS:

A. NUMBER VOTING: 7,163,007 OUT OF 7,708,954
REGISTERED VOTERS.

B. PERCENTAGE OF YES VOTES AMONG VALID BALLOTS 99.96.

C. NUMBER OF NO VOTES: 57,922.

2. AS WAS TRUE IN NATIONAL CHARTER VOTE, RELATIVELY LOW
TURNOUT (64 PERCENT) IN ALGIERS HELD DOWN PERCENTAGE OF
REGISTERED VOTERS WHO CAST BALLOTS. THIS FIGURE WAS LOWER
BY FIVE PERCENT THAN IN NATIONAL CHARTER VOTE. TLEMEN
ALSO OFF FROM 89 TO 86 PERCENT, BUT CONSTANTINE ROSE FROM
77 TO 88.

3. FOLLOWING ARE OUR IMPRESSIONS OF LATEST INSTITUTION
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BUILDING EXERCISE:

A. AS IN NATIONAL CHARTER REFERENDUM, IT SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN EASIER FOR REGIME TO RECORD ALMOST TOTAL PARTICIPATION FIGURES IN COUNTRYSIDE THAN IN ALGIERS WHICH CONSISTENTLY LAGS BEHIND NATIONAL AVERAGE. RURAL VOTE RELATIVELY EASY FOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES TO GET OUT, WHEREAS IN ALGIERS, ORGANIZATIONAL TASK MUCH MORE COMPLEX. ONE EXAMPLE OF PROBLEMS FACED BY REFERENDUM'S ORGANIZERS WAS REDUCED FRIDAY BUS SERVICE WHICH PREVENTED SOME VOTERS FROM GETTING TO THEIR VOTING PRECINCTS.

B. OUR NECESSARILY LIMITED IMPRESSION IS THAT VOTER TURNOUT IN ALGIERS AREA LIGHT. POLLS NOT HEAVILY ATTENDED.

C. AT SAME TIME, WE SENSE FEELING AMONG MORE EDUCATED ELEMENTS THAT IT WOULD HAVE BEEN IMPOLITIC NOT TO VOTE. AT TIME OF NATIONAL CHARTER VOTE, SOME PERSONS INDICATED THEY WOULD NOT BE CAUGHT DEAD AT POLLS. THIS TIME, THIS THEME HEARD LESS FREQUENTLY, ALTHOUGH STILL PLENTY OF DISENCHANTMENT. PARKER

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